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SENSITIVE

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SUBJECT: UNHRO December 2007 Human Rights Assessment

¶1. (SBU) Summary: The UN's December 2007 Human Rights Assessment describes a number of human rights violations by FARDC soldiers. This message highlights three arbitrary killings of civilian by soldiers. In two of the three cases, military authorities took no action against the alleged perpetrators. End Summary

¶2. (U) The United Nations Human Rights Office's (UNHRO) December 2007 Human Rights Assessment for the DRC, released February 12, 2008, includes several examples of a human rights violation long common in Congo: attempted extortion by government soldiers leading to murder. In one case, a soldier of the 3rd Company of the FARDC 7th Integrated Brigade shot dead a civilian at an illegal roadblock December 16 in Bolobo, Bandundu. Witnesses reported the soldier shot the civilian when he did not pay 200 FC (40 cents) demanded by the soldier. The soldier was later arrested and transferred to the military prosecutor in Bandundu town.

¶3. (U) In another case, soldiers of the FARDC 6th Integrated Brigade shot dead a civilian in Kalengera, North Kivu during the night of December 24, allegedly because he refused their attempt to extort his radio. There are no reports of military authorities taking action against the perpetrators.

¶4. (U) A third example occurred December 1 in Nzibira, South Kivu when, according to local sources, a soldier of the FARDC 11th Integrated Brigade shot dead a vendor who requested that the soldier pay for a bottle of beer he had ordered. There are no reports of military authorities taking action against the soldier.

¶5. (SBU) Comment: Lack of action by military authorities to consistently address daily human rights abuses by soldiers contributes to the prevailing climate of impunity and further undermines the legitimacy of Congolese justice. The demonstrated lack of discipline among members of the integrated brigades also damages the credibility of the military integration process. End Comment.

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